

**THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES**  
**COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS**  
**SCHOOLS OF ART & MEDIA ARTS**  
**BFA HONOURS**

**General Information February 2002**

**Introduction** The BFA Honours programme is in its ninth year of operation and continues to have a high success rate amongst its graduates. It has undergone several important changes since its inception, most notably the recent division of the former School of Art into two separate schools. But the degree is not specific to any one school and the original framework and ambition for all disciplines remain essentially in place. It is a full-time year of study and contrasts markedly with the composition and requirements of the preceding undergraduate BFA. Emphasis is placed upon a year long project of research with the understanding that students are to be self-reliant and wholly committed to their programme of study through two consecutive sessions.

**Structure and requirements of the course**

**Supervision** Each student has a member of the teaching staff, usually from the relevant study area, allocated as their supervisor. This is not necessarily the same member of staff for each session. Consultations between staff and students should take place at mutually agreed intervals and it is important to ensure that all appointment times are kept. An average expectation is for one group and two individual consultations in each session but this is a guide only and can vary according to individual requirements. It is not possible for students to elect their supervisor.

**Honours Studio Practice** One formal class of three hours per week in each study area is held throughout both sessions and includes students who are enrolled in the Master of Art (by Coursework) programme. These classes are normally held on Wednesday from 6-9 pm but can vary from time to time; attendance at this class is a course requirement. It is expected that clear evidence in the form of work in progress characterise all students' presence in the studios, demonstrating self-motivation and independent practice. No assessment mark is given at the end of session 1 but a grade of SY (satisfactory) or UF (unsatisfactory) with SY interpreted as credit level (65%) and above, is necessary to proceed to session 2. At the end of Session 2 the same SY or UF is given before proceeding to exhibition.

**Mid-year review** Whenever possible the Schools of Art & Media Arts conduct a mid-year review of each Honours student's work by an external arts practitioner. The purpose of the review is advisory and no grading is recorded. In recent years this practice has proved to be enormously beneficial to students' development therefore, the expectation is that everyone will avail themselves of this opportunity to discuss their work. It is normally scheduled for the start of session 2 but can occur during the mid-year recess.

**Honours Paper** As a further requirement of the course each student must research, write and submit an Honours Paper of approximately 5,000 words by the set deadline. In consultation with their supervisor students will select a subject for research that is related to or directly informs their studio practice. The following draft deadlines have been developed to synchronise with and benefit from the requirement to attend the Research Methods class.

*Session 1 week 11* Preliminary outline due, approximately 1,500 words, marked by a Research Methods class lecturer as SY or UF. Also read by supervisor, feedback given and problems identified.

*Session 2 week 5* Draft of Research Paper due, feedback in Research Methods class by lecturers.

*Session 2 week 10* Honours Paper due. Research Methods class ends, paper read and marked by two lecturers.

**Overdue Honours Papers will incur a penalty at the rate of two marks per day late to be deducted from the final mark for the paper up to a maximum of seven days, after which it becomes inadmissible. Any writing problems and or editorial difficulties should be identified early and remedied by the student. Correction of poor grammar, spelling and syntax is not the responsibility of readers or assessors.**

***Research Methods*** Attendance at this class is a requirement for the Honours programme and will greatly assist in the preparation, structure and presentation of the finished Honours Paper. Held on Thursday between 2-4pm, the class looks at research methodologies pertinent to fine arts practice and is conducted Dr. Perter Hill, School of History/Theory and Martin Sims, School of Art. Attendance is assessed as either SY or UF with SY interpreted as pass level (50%) or above.

***Research Seminar*** Attendance during the MFA Research Seminar Week is also a requirement of the Honours programme. This is a concentrated forum of discussion and presentations by higher degree students extending over a number of days in week 6 of each session. In session one Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> and Friday 19<sup>th</sup> April have been scheduled for lectures. Dates for session two are yet to be finalised. Honours students' attendance at this forum is also assessed as either SY or UF with SY interpreted as pass level (50%) or above.

**Final Assessment Procedures** All course requirements must have been satisfactorily completed prior to final assessment. *Honours Studio Practice* will be assessed in the context of a presentation of the completed studio research work shown as part of the annual graduating students' exhibitions. Each student's presentation will be assessed by a panel of assessors one of whom will be an external examiner. Each assessor provides a numerical mark from a maximum 100 and these are averaged to constitute a final mark for studio practice, which represents 75% of the total mark.

Two copies of the *Honours Paper* should be submitted to the Research Methods class lecturers in a completed form by the date due in week 10 of session 2 having met all previous requirements. The paper will be read by two lecturers but not the student's supervisor and where assessment marks differ by a margin greater than 10 a third reader will be used. Each assessor provides a numerical mark from a maximum 100 and these are averaged to constitute a final mark for the Honours Paper, which represents 25% of the total mark. To assist external examiners in their appraisal of a student's studio practice, Honours Papers are sent to them for reading in advance of final assessment but no mark is given. One copy of the Honours Paper will be retained by the Schools of Art & Media Arts, the other copy will be lodged in the COFA library.

**External Assessors** The Schools of Art & Media Arts engage external examiners from universities in the wider Sydney metropolitan region. This includes Independent contributions from staff at Newcastle School of Fine Art, Sydney College of The Arts and the University of Western Sydney, Nepean.

### **Additional matters**

**BFA Honours Coordinators** Each discipline area has a designated Honours coordinator as follows:

Painting & Drawing	Peter Pinson <a href="mailto:p.pinson@unsw.edu.au">p.pinson@unsw.edu.au</a> Ph. 9385 0730
Time-Based Art	John Gillies <a href="mailto:John.Gillies@unsw.edu.au">John.Gillies@unsw.edu.au</a> Ph. 9385 0707
Photomedia	Lachlan Warner <a href="mailto:Lachlan.warner@unsw.edu.au">Lachlan.warner@unsw.edu.au</a> Ph. 9385 0768
Sculpture	Martin Sims <a href="mailto:m.sims@unsw.edu.au">m.sims@unsw.edu.au</a> Ph. 9385 0655

Head, School of Art Sylvia Ross [sylvia.ross@unsw.edu.au](mailto:sylvia.ross@unsw.edu.au) Ph. 9385 0667

Head, School of Media Arts Phil George [p.george@unsw.edu.au](mailto:p.george@unsw.edu.au) Ph. 9385 0697

**Student email addresses** Honours students are required to access their university email address regularly for all communications relating to their time on course. Personal email addresses are not recognised for posting official notices. Only under exceptional circumstances will conventional postal services be used to convey information. All students are encouraged to access the *Phorum board* sites via the college website for peer group communications and other important information.

**Attendance** All students enrolled in the Bachelor of Fine Arts Honours degree commit to one year of full-time study. Accordingly the expectation is for a responsible attitude towards attendance and an appropriate level of participation in all formal requirements of the course. Attendance sheets are to be signed at both the Research Methods Class and at lectures during the Research Seminar Week. This record of involvement is a proven reflection of a student's overall performance during the year.

**Marks and grades** The following schedule shows numerical and equivalent grades.

85	100	High Distinction	Honours Class 1
75	84	Distinction	Honours Class 2 Level 1
65	74	Credit	Honours Class 2 Level2

For marks below 65 the degree of Honours is not awarded.

***Problems and difficulties*** Any student experiencing adverse circumstances affecting their progress during the Honours year should advise their supervisor - in confidence - as soon as practicably possible.